



# MO'OLELO PĀKA

## Parks and Recreation Newsletter *October 2021*

Framed by the Waia'anae Mountains and adjacent to Mākaha Elementary School, this 4.32-acre park nestled in this Leeward neighborhood boasts lots of recently renovated facilities such as bathrooms, a playground, basketball, volleyball, and pickleball courts! A Community Development Block Grant project (CDBG) is finishing soon for this park, with improvements to the roofing sewer lines, ADA accessibility, and interior repairs including LED lighting. Most Leeward City parks are along the shoreline, so definitely check out this mauka site when on the westside!

“We add quality to life!”



### Reopening Our Gymnasiums!

As the pandemic situation improves on O'ahu, our phased reopening of indoor facilities progresses with permitted use of gymnasiums restart on Oct. 18. Next step, active use of smaller facilities like fitness and boxing rooms

### 33<sup>rd</sup> Talk Story Festival

Just in time for Halloween, the oldest storytelling celebration in the state began with two spooky tales from Lopaka Kapanui. Make sure to check out all of these colorful tales on our social media feeds. Links are provided below. Enjoy!

### Planting Trees in the Urban Core

Two projects in October planted a combined 47 trees around our urban core. 44 trees were planted in the Downtown Chinatown area, and pictured above is one of 3 Gold Trees planted thanks to a donation from the Shufu Society of Hawai'i.

### Kokonut Koalition Recognition

Celebrating 6,000 hours of volunteer work hauling over 608,000 lbs of supplies to repair hundreds of stairs at the Koko Crater Tramway, Mayor honored the hardworking Kokonut Koalition to mark the completion of their initial volunteer efforts.

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# Kākou for Parks Updates:

This unparalleled program continues to revitalize our aging and most popular facilities island-wide, resulting in 184 different parks improved. See more at [bit.ly/KakouforParks](https://bit.ly/KakouforParks)



Whitmore Neighborhood Park



'Aiea District Park



Koko Head Neighborhood Park

## 132

New & Refurbished Play Apparatus

## 136

Renovated Comfort Stations

## 481

Resurfaced Play Courts

## Congratulations to our Employees and Manager of the Year!



### Thomas Null

As a plant propagator at the breathtaking Ho'omaluhia Botanical Garden, Thom's skill and excellent work ethic are evident through his well-organized & meticulously documented nursery, his willingness to step-up as a leader in tough times, and his immense horticultural knowledge which he readily shares with other staff and garden visitors. Thom is prompt, dependable, and routinely demonstrates that he loves his job and our diverse, lush botanical gardens. In addition to serving as a role model, Thomas works efficiently and decisively to get the job done under any circumstance. Keep up the good work!



### Christine Ching

#### *Manager of the Year for the City!*

Congratulation to Christine Ching for being awarded Manager of the Year for the entire City and County of Honolulu! She truly leads by example, pushing herself and her staff to continue serving the community. Her passion for improving low-income neighborhoods has consistently provided tangible benefits for those communities. She'll be the first to say that being recognized as Manager of the Year is a reflection of her hardworking staff and the dedication they show to their parks. It is that kind of humility that has contributed to her exemplary service to the City and our island community.



### Michael "Kekoa" Masutani

As a groundskeeper who serviced parks from Waipahū to Whitmore Village in Central O'ahu (now at Ho'omaluhia) Kekoa truly personifies aloha and a sense of community care through every aspect of his work. He is well-known for consistently exceeding his standard duties, exemplifying care, compassion, and respect to all of those who are fortunate to interact with him professionally and personally. Whether that's making sure Summer Fun keiki are well-fed and kept safe with clean facilities or assisting kūpuna through simple acts of kindness by helping to carry their belongings, you can always find Kekoa going above and beyond the call of duty to make everyone's park experience more enjoyable. Mahalo Kekoa and congratulations!